

# Halifax "unaccommodating" to foreign students

by Tarra Kongsrude

Finding housing in Halifax is a problem for all students this year but the difficulties are compounded for international students because "landlords are often reluctant to rent to them," says Karanja Njoroge, the International Student Coordinator.

Approximately 20 students seeking assistance from his office this semester related the same story: the landlords accepted them over the phone but said the apartments were rented when they arrived with their room deposits.

"Landlords always seem to ask more of foreign students," Njoroge noted. "Many demand a Canadian co-sign the lease," he said, "but international students know few natives when they first arrive.

"One landlord told a Chinese student he needed her parents'

signatures before he could rent her a room," Njoroge said.

The "surprising number of complaints" about Halifax landlords precipitated Njoroge's decision to include a human rights officer in the International Students orientation seminar on Sept. 9.

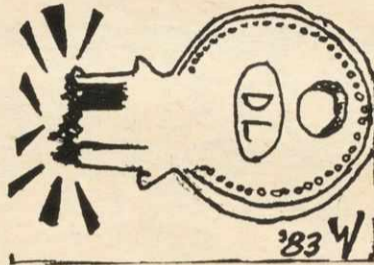
According to Njoroge, most students avoid legal entanglements with problem landlords because of time and money constraints. "However," he noted, the students "feel better now that they know there are people willing to help."

Dora Maria Carbonu, president of the International Students' Association, said she personally has experienced difficulties with landlords in the past but cannot comment about the landlord problem this year.

However, she emphasized,

international students appear to have particular difficulty finding suitable housing. "I hope Halifaxians will be more responsive to the needs of international students, even if it is only to provide some temporary accommodations," she said.

International students met with Mayor Ron Wallace as part of orientation week activities. Carbonu said she broached the housing problem with the Mayor during this meeting but he offered no concrete solutions.



A group of International Students paid a courtesy call on the Mayor of Halifax Ron Wallace. The visit organized by the Overseas Coordinator Karanja Njoroge was aimed at familiarizing Halifax civic leaders with the international nature of our University Campus. The Mayor is seen here chatting with the group.

## letters cont'd

with the Palestine question.

The Association has no affiliation, whatsoever, with the P.L.O.

2) The group that brought about the disruption of this lecture were determined to use any means to prevent this public lecture by the use of physical threats to St. Mary's University, Dalhousie University, the speaker, the organisers and anyone who had the temerity to come listen to the lecture. Dalhousie security and police authorities can confirm that.

3) It is unfair to ascribe this act of hooliganism to Lebanese Maronite-Christians. A number of Lebanese Maronite-Christians have called before and after this act dissociating themselves from this behaviour. The perpetrators reflect a political, not a religious, ideology of the Lebanese phalangist party.

4) The issue here, however, is a fundamental one namely academic freedom and the freedom of free speech and expression in a university campus. Any one may question a speaker or disagree with his point of view but no one should be allowed to prevent one from speaking. It is this fundamental right which we cherish in this country and must guard, at any price.

Yours sincerely,  
Ismail Zayid  
President

Canada Palestine Association

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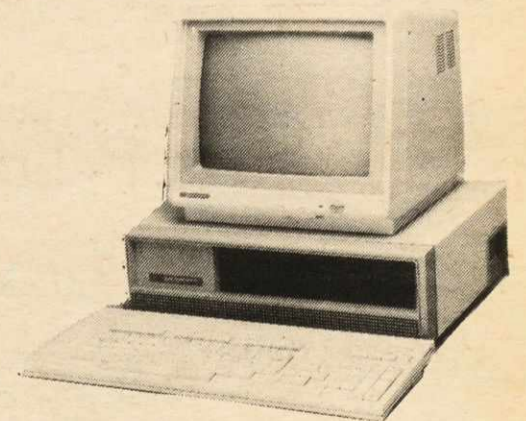
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